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OPIUM REVENUE OF INDIA.

THE QUESTION ANSWERED,

THAT

IT IS NOT RIGHT TO BREAK THE LAWS OF ENGLAND AND OF CHINA, AND INJURE THE COMMERCE OF BOTH COUNTRIES, FOR THE SAKE OF TEMPORARILY OBTAINING £3,000,000 STERLING, BY DESTROYING THE LIVES, MORALITY, AND COMMERCIAL RECIPROCITY, OF 300,000,000 OF OUR FELLOW-MEN.

BY

MAJOR-GENERAL ALEXANDER.

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OPIUM REVENUE.

In a pamphlet on the Opium Revenue of India, the anonymous author commences with a somewhat energetic outburst against that ignorant impatience of taxation which characterises the people of Great Britain. He tells us that direct taxation has been found worse than indirect, and gives us the comforting assurance, that "no ministry will dare to propose a new tax of either class." Had such an harbinger given us his name, it might have inspired more confidence; but if even his susceptibility should have been imposed upon in this instance, he will find many tax-payers who will think that when they have brought the Chancellor of the Exchequer to that point in which "it will be as much as he can do to maintain a sufficiency of existing resources to meet existing wants, without adding to debt," they will have accomplished the great economic desideratum of providing for the necessary expenses of the State, and allowing no scope for waste or superfluities. So far then there will be much agreement as to his conclusions, though not improbably some difference regarding the way in which they are arrived at.

Turning from British finance we find our Anonymous less tolerant towards a party which, according to his description, is composed of most heterogeneous minds; not only devoted to inquiries affecting their own welfare within the encircling seas of our native isles, but venturing to expose the errors of principle and demoralising ten-

dency of taxes levied on our Indian fellow-subjects, thousands of miles off, with which neither these agitators nor the Parliament and public whom they address have any direct concern. To this, I believe, we may demur. Principles for good and evil are the same in all lands, and are but differently expressed in various languages; the discordance which he deprecates is the evidence of incremental error, and constitutes the cry or groan of violated harmony for a restitution of its rights. India has been by no exaggerated metaphor termed the brightest colonial jewel in the British crown, and whatever affects the spiritual and temporal welfare of its 150,000,000 people, is not only a legitimate object of interest to our higher qualities and feelings, but is most intimately interwoven with our whole system of national advancement and prosperity. Our author may be as right in his denunciation of tyros in political economy, and unfledged statesmen, as he is delicate and refined in his allusions to those whom he would instruct by his wisdom and warn by his experience; but after all, it is rather with their arguments than their personalities that the public has to deal; and gladly would I borrow from the plumage of his knowledge a feather with which to endorse the words that he somewhat hypothetically utters, viz. "that monopoly of production is "opposed to free-trade principles; that opium is noxious; that "the Government of China has condemned and prohibited its use; "and that the Government of India, by increasing the supply, is "helping to poison the population of a nation," with which we profess a friendly alliance.

The question that our author propounds is, "Is it right to take three millions sterling from the Chinese beyond the cost price of the drug, as the condition of their enjoying the forbidden indulgence of opium smoking?"* To which I unhesitatingly answer, No, it is not right; and proceed to prove the wrong.

A generation of the human race has hardly passed away since there was so small an opium trade between India and China, that 200 chests, admitted through the Chinese custom-house at a moderate duty, constituted the whole. In the latter part of last century, when the East India Company was a trading corporation of mer-

*See a Pamphlet on the "Opium Revenue of India" published by Allen & Co Leadenhall

chants, entrusted also with something more than viceregal power, they established for their own profit a monopoly of the drug. Avarice suggested, and despotism enabled that suggestion to be carried into effect, that a rigid monopoly of production and capability of supplying demand to any extent to which it might be stimulated, would afford a more certain income than could be relied upon from the ordinary course of commercial export on account of the East India Company.

In a few years, the result more than bore out the most sanguine expectations that had been formed; the monopoly, as shown in evidence before Parliament by the servants of the East India Company, extended over all India; and Lord W. Bentinck when Governor-General, informed the Court of Directors that "the final effect of an increase, beyond assignable limit, in the quantity of the drug exported to China from both sides of India, is a result beyond the power of our foresight to discover, or even at present to hazard any speculation upon."

But while this progress was contemplated with such complacency in India and the councils of Leadenhall Street, there was a very different view taken of it by the Imperial authority and statesmen of China. The demoralisation of the people became alarmingly rapid, and its ratio might be estimated by that of the increased importation of opium, prepared, not as formerly for medicinal purposes, but expressly for the indulgence of a vicious propensity. The drug was declared to be contraband by law; penalties were enacted against its importation and deleterious use; and in the course of diplomatic intercourse between friendly nations, every law, edict, and proclamation promulgated by the Chinese, was communicated to the authorised representatives of Great Britain, with strong remonstrances against the traffic, and earnest entreaties that it might be suppressed.

In order to keep before my readers the simplicity of the great principles at issue, I shall put aside as much as possible all details, and avoid entering into particulars regarding the manner in which the opium traffic has been conducted in China for more than half a century. It dates no further back than I have intimated, and is

not one of those sources of revenue which our instructor on this occasion describes to be "as old as the hills."

We have two great nations that ought to be reciprocally beneficial to each other, in direct antagonism upon one point. Great Britain having caused, stimulated, and supplied the demand for what is injurious to the moral and commercial prosperity of China, derives in one branch of her many sources of revenue and to the detriment of others, an annual income stated by our author to be 3,000,000*l.* sterling. China, too weak to offer successfully an armed resistance to our armies and navy, and incapacitated by the demoralisation of her people from presenting such an opposition to unjust measures as was exhibited by the fathers of American independence, when they made virtuous self-denial the means of counteracting arbitrary taxation, has hitherto pleaded in vain for pity or relief. England and the world are unhappily too familiar with the blood-stained atrocities of the Opium war, and circumstances are now forcing upon public attention the question, whether the measures that caused that war, and continue to disturb the even course of commercial intercourse, are to be abolished or continued.

In the debates in Parliament, in the many publications on the subject, in all that has been alleged by those interested in or opposed to opium-smuggling in China, I do not remember to have met with one instance in which there has been such an attempt as this to deny its immorality, or prove that the monopoly and its consequences are sound in principle, and, like all legitimate commerce, beneficial to mankind. The small number of merchants who are more or less engaged, either on their own account or as almost involuntary agents for others, palliate as they best may what none can justify, and which several would most gladly be emancipated from. The East India Company—or, more properly speaking in the present day, the President of the Board of Control—pleads nothing but a miserable and short-sighted expediency and 3,000,000*l.* sterling of income, in answer to the overwhelming proofs that the income is illegal and precarious; that it is derived from a source injurious not only to Great Britain, but to India and China, and bearing on its front the certain condemnation that what

is religiously and morally wrong never can be politically right, honourable, nor eventually advantageous.

I concede at once that the opium revenue has increased, is increasing, and while affairs continue as at present, will for a time increase still more. I admit that it is an important—far too important—source of Indian revenue. I am quite of opinion that an equal revenue cannot, while circumstances remain as they now are in India and China, be realised with such facile readiness. But thus admitting all that its advocates plead for as expedient, I say at once that the degrading immorality of the whole system cries to God and man for its condemnation, and the merest dictates of prudent foresight and common sense imperatively require that the stability of the finances of our Indian empire shall be placed on a sounder basis.

The advocates of the system urge that monopoly is in its nature restrictive, and therefore operates as some check to extended use. Lord Cornwallis argued thus when he stated that maximum taxation would ensure minimum consumption. Now, instead of bewildering ourselves with theories, look to results. Lord W. Bentinck has shown us the object and anticipations which Lord Dalhousie, in his celebrated minute on his own administration, proves to have been so largely realised. The East India Company's monopoly is used, *not for restriction,* but for obtaining the largest profit on the largest quantity of opium for which the largest demand can be excited. Opium agents are allowed a per-centage upon what they can sell, or cause to be sold, in India; and if Lord Dalhousie's estimate is to be reached, there ought now to be an importation of not less than 120,000 chests annually into China.

It is as impossible to calculate the amount of opium used by each individual in China as it would be to know from the aggregate Excise returns the quantity of gin drunk by single persons here. If the opponents to opium smuggling mention large quantities, and count consumers by millions, they are accused of ignorance and exaggeration; while, on the other hand, such reasoners as our unknown author, plead for the harmlessness of moderation. Some of them have argued that this is evinced in the common use

of the drug by all classes, and that cases have been known where three hundred grains a-day have been smoked and the man still lived. From what has been published on the subject, it seems that six grains a-day may be taken as the quantity used by a beginner or a very moderate smoker. The same authorities tell us almost unanimously that moderation in opium-smoking* is, as a general rule, an impossibility. Some of them have thought that from seventeen to twenty grains a-day will represent a fair average. Now this, at the rate of importation in 1855-6, would give, in round numbers, about 8,000,000 of smokers of the pure drug in China; but, from the same sources of information, we learn that very few—and those only among the richest of the people—can afford to smoke the drug as it arrives with the brand of the East India Company. As soon as it gets into the hands of the native dealers, it is adulterated; and thus calculation of the number of smokers from this data is baffled. The melancholy experience of hospital practice, however, affords a nearer approximation to accuracy in the statistics of mortality. There is a very general accordance, that though some men have smoked opium for more than thirty years, yet the general duration of life from the time that a person commences the habit, does not average more than ten years. Some writers set it down at less.

There is a charge of inconsistency brought against those who would abolish the monopoly and retain restriction upon growth and production. The author under consideration points to the baneful

* Perhaps few instances of roundabout reasoning can exceed that of Mr. Meadows', quoted approvingly by our author as authority for the harmlessness of opium smoking. I will put his facts in juxta-position:—"Smoking a little opium daily is like taking a pint or two of ale, or a few glasses of wine daily; smoking more opium is like taking brandy as well as beer and wine; smoking very much opium is like excessive brandy and gin drinking, leading to *delirium tremens* and premature death. *When once the habit of opium-smoking is taken up* [the Italics are mine], the discontinuance of the *daily whiff* thus habitually taken as a luxury, produces discomfort in the extreme; so that, howsoever the price of the article may be raised, the opium-smoker will still not deny himself the luxury, *so long as by any means* he can purchase the drug:" and so Mr. Meadows recommends that the price may be lowered, and the drug rendered more generally and easily accessible. Our author says, that "this is the most unexceptionable and best testimony of an official personage;" and there I leave it.

effects of unrestricted produce in Rajpootana and Assam, and asks, "If more opium were grown in India, is enlarged consumption a good?" No, I reply; it is because I would not inflict or allow these evils that I would abolish monopoly and maintain restriction; and if I may be permitted an analogy, I would point to what is done in a country where no Minister of the Crown dare propose a monopoly, and in which the people would not bear with the milder application of the system that existed under the disguise of Corn-laws. In England the restriction is imposed for fiscal reasons; I claim it for India and China, on the higher grounds of religious principle and moral right.

In Ireland, and in many parts of England and Scotland, tobacco might be grown to any extent, and yet the laws of Britain prohibit the cultivation of a single plant. Moreover, they impose a duty of, I believe, about 300 per cent on the imported leaves. Now let what is here legally and on justifiable principle done to assist the revenue, be applied to the moral benefit of the East;—prohibit the growth of poppies, and put any duty you please upon foreign opium.

Our author asks, at page 7, what is to be substituted for the existing system with its machinery? I have already elsewhere said, the cultivation of cotton, tea, sugar, indigo, and other commercial reproductives, without any such machinery or government interference as now exists. Let me show what this last is, from the select records of the Bengal Government.

An Indian having a certain number of cultivators under him, obtains from the Government an advance of money, for which he is bound, under severe penalties, to give at a fixed price a certain quantity, and all other opium above that quantity, produced on his lands. To encourage the extension of poppy cultivation, larger advances are given to those who bring new lands under the crop, and themselves under the privileges of that peculiar legislation, which I have indicated in a pamphlet "On the Rise and Progress of Opium Smuggling;" and which (the legislation, not the pamphlet) seems to find no disfavour in my critic's eyes.

In the Benares district alone, in 1849–50, there were 107,823

beegahs of land under poppy cultivation. The first officer in what our author calls the machinery is the opium agent. The agency is marked out into eight divisions, each under a sub-agent. In every district in which there is a sub-agency, the Government collector of revenue (and I hope my readers know what his powers are) is *ex-officio* a deputy agent, charged with a supervision of the sub-agent, and with the investigation of all suits that may arise *in re* Opium.—Vide Regulation XIII. of 1816, Bengal Code of Regulations, for the law upon the subject.

Every division is again partitioned out under Gomashtas, under each of whom is a treasurer and suitable establishment. The Gomashta pays the advances to the Ryots or farmers, measures their lands, receives and weighs their produce, and is responsible for its delivery. To assist in this department he has under him Jemadars and Zillahdars, whose duty it is to watch the ryots. Apart from these, there is in each division, *custos custodium,* a Mohotonim, who exerts a general supervision of every thing transacting therein, making frequent reports of every event that occurs. In short, this machinery presents to us the agricultural population of a district amounting to about 128,000 farmers and labourers, watched over in their daily occupations by 150 native officers of the first class, and about 1200 officials and paid servants in constant employ, besides the superior European officers. During the manufacturing season there are often upwards of 600 extra hands employed in the Ghazeepoor factory alone, including from fifteen to twenty European assistants and boys.

We are told, on the high authority from which I have taken the above, that all connected with the opium monopoly is "most wise," and all "works smoothly and well;" if so, this wisdom is still far east of Great Britain, and the well-working would be more easily accepted if it did not "afford the pabulum," upon which, according to our Unknown, "spare ingenuity will occupy itself," and which furnishes food for meditation on such a passage as the following. Writing of the arrears into which the cultivators fall, the official selector from the records of Bengal lets this incident crop out from the rich field of happiness enjoyed in opium districts,

Government being the creditor in the case:—"It is clear that, when such balances become so large that the cultivator cannot discharge them, he is no longer a free agent, but is perfectly subservient to the will of his creditor, for whom he must cultivate whether he desire it or not. Such burdens may even be handed down from father to son." And yet our author asserts that "the poppy cultivation is not, and never has been compulsory."

The advocates of opium monopoly and traffic delight in a comparison of the intoxication caused by the drug and by gin. I rather incline, if we must select a preference in such miserable degradation, to agree with them that opium smoking, though more destructive to its victims, is less dangerous to bystanders; under its effects the unhappy wretch sinks into helpless insensibility to all external objects, until waking from his sensual dream he needs the nursing that abates the horrors of *delirium tremens.* Those who have read or seen what running a "*muck*" is, or a Mahomedan Soonee population during the last three days of a Moharum, know well what are the effects of opium eating. My object, however, now is to suggest that the admirers of our laws of bankruptcy, chancery, &c., may contemplate hereditary insolvency and perpetual debt with its consequences, and institute as reasonable a comparison as between the results of gin-drinking and the use of opium. Taking these things also into consideration, I am constrained to repeat my "No" to the author's question, and plead for India and the Chinese.

At pp. 8 and 9 of his pamphlet, the Anonymous admits an agreement with what I have stated regarding the unrestricted growth and sale of opium in Rajpootana and Assam. His own words are:—"The condition of the Rajpoots of Central India, where the growth of the poppy is free, is universally held up as an evidence of the demoralising, enervating, life-destroying effect of this drug." I only ask to apply this description to the 300,000,000 millions of China; and again, as a Christian and an Englishman, to answer his question with sorrowful indignation—No—No—No!

Our author is perfectly correct in saying, at page 9, that it is

not free production and free sale of opium in India that is advocated by the opponents of monopoly. There is evidently a confusion in his mind on the subject of free-trade principles. They are only applicable to what is just, right, and reciprocally beneficial: they cannot be brought in accordance with African slave-trade or opium smuggling in China, both being so irremediably unclean, that a clean commercial system can neither be brought out of, nor interwoven with them. Most truly does he state a fact and principle, neither of which, I fear, he either fully comprehends or appreciates:—"Free production benefits are secondary with them (myself and such-like) to high moral considerations." But only free productions of evil are so deemed secondary, because we hold that the freest production of what is unquestionably and reproductively beneficial to mankind, is not only compatible, but absolutely identical, with the highest principles of our nature, whether developed in the duties of religion or the legitimate pursuits of legislation, science, political economy, and commercial intercourse. Is not our author aware, that in this country where trade principles are, according to his view, "running upon wild freedom," there is no such unrestricted traffic in intoxication as he and others would impose as the alternative for abolition of a monopoly? No one can sell beer, wine, or spirits except under permission of a restrictive license, which magistrates may withhold from an immoral character; or refuse, if they think that the shops within their jurisdiction are too numerous for the general good of the inhabitants. Nay, more: there is even a restriction upon the evil freedom of the subject in this freest of all lands, and if my *vis-à-vis* should unhappily indulge too freely in what demoralises our population, he would render himself amenable to restrictive law, and liable to a penalty for an enjoyment correlative with that which he would sell so largely to the Chinese.

At pages 10, 11, I find a mystification about the opium monopoly and free trade, which I will endeavour to clear up in a few words. The science of political economy, like all other sciences, proceeds upon sound data and just principles. Introduce an error or incongruity, and you can never arrive at correct results. If you

try to compound from the dicta of arbitrary power, the selfishness of monopolised trade, and the violation of the laws of two nations, a system of commerce such as we have by these means established against, not with, China; then I say that you have but to leave these elements to work out their inevitable results, and the destruction of the compound is as certain as the analytic solution of substances in whose properties there is neither chemical affinity nor cohesion. There is a question of time, none of eventuality.

It is not, as our author would lead us to believe, a plain matter of demand and supply, the one healthily and reproductively alimenting the other; but the whole thing is false and artificial. It is a vicious demand, originated and supplied by a government whose connexion with trade at all is an illegal intromission, and would be, even under better circumstances, an improper and unseemly competition with its subjects: it furnishes another opportunity to reply to the Unknown, No—No—No.

The best answer I can give to what, according to our author, is *not* "twaddle," (vide page 12,) is this:—Go down to some den of drunken debauchery and degradation; select which you will of the miserable objects before you, of whom there are thousands in this country more or less wretched than the millions of opium victims in China; and learn the practical lesson in political economy which our author suggests. Why is that poor creature, hatless, shoeless, shirtless, sunk from the high dignity of a being created to hold communion with his God, to a sad spectacle of humanity brutalised below the protective instinct of beasts? There is the very climax in a man, to which the opium trade is rapidly bringing China. As he gave his money for gin instead of wholesome food and clothes, so China gives her bullion for opium instead of British manufactures. And as the drunkard sinks into a dishonourable grave, no longer capable of consuming that which caused his ruin, so must China in her present course become impoverished and unable to pay for the opium which is now destroying her vitality. I need but refer my readers to the admirable argument on this head which is to be found in the just-published number of the "North British Review."

The author asserts that it is a fallacy to suppose that the payment for opium in silver deranges the monetary system of China. A select committee of the House of Commons, Mr. Montgomery Martin, and numerous authorities, mercantile and other, English, American, and Chinese, assert the contrary, and there I leave the question. The monetary system of China, however, is deranged; and if not by opium, then by what other cause?

As regards the Government being the very head and front of the system of smuggling, I must again borrow a feather from the author's plumage to record his own words, and then leave them to the support of his own vindication. "Now the Government is a contrabandist, because the article cannot reach the consumers except through the smuggler's intervention;" and, "the smuggler cannot get the opium except from the Government." That the Government provides and sells opium for the sake of the profit are the Unknown's *ipsissima verba*.

Our author adduces Napoleon's Milan decree in support of his argument. There is, however, one trifling difference which he overlooks. Napoleon's Milan and Berlin decrees were issued to shut out the manufactures of a nation with which he was at war. His object was to ensure his own success, and, if possible, to bring about a peace by means intended to be more efficacious and which were less dreadful than bloodshed and devastation. Britain's opium smuggling is carried on to intrude a contraband drug upon a people with whom she is at peace: against the laws of both countries, and enforced by those vindictive horrors which Napoleon's measures were meant to bring to a speedier termination. I confess that I cannot see any objection, moral, commercial, or political, to the open lawful sale of English manufactures in Heligoland, or any British colony or possession, under any circumstances, or at any time. The articles alluded to were those of sound legitimate commerce, and so far from being injurious were, wherever they found sale and use, beneficial to mankind. Let us deal as honestly with China, and leave her emperor as we left the first Napoleon, and still leave the third, to regulate his tariffs, and protect his coasts against invading contrabandists. We simply dare

not deal with France, nor any European or American power, as we have dealt, and still continue to deal, with the Chinese.

The author, at page 25, argues that the endeavour to get rid of the salt monopoly, "in deference to the known prejudices of the British public, will fail," because a considerable capital is required to prepare works for independent manufacture, or to make advances for produce. But at page 27 he urges, that if the monopoly of opium were abolished, and a duty levied on its export, so much capital would be embarked that we should have the poppy growing everywhere. Now it requires much more capital for the more precarious cultivation of the poppy than for the certainly profitable manufacture of salt; and from whence is the capital to come for that?

Notwithstanding the difference of our views, I feel no inclination to retract what my opponent calls "the summing up of my pamphlet," nor to withhold my acknowledgment of the perhaps too flattering designation which he gives it. I am glad that it is considered in any degree oracular; and as it is little else than a compilation of arranged facts, presented to the public for consideration and discussion, so far is it from my desire that when I speak no dog should bark, that I will hail with pleasure the music of the cry that shall hunt down even my own errors. Only let me observe, however, that the meaning which the Unknown puts upon my expression at pp. 35 and 36 of his book is his, not mine. So far from thinking that the suppression of the opium monopoly and smuggling will take one rupee from every five of the population of India, I do most firmly believe that it would be the means not only of enriching them to a much larger amount, but of affording increased wealth to Great Britain through her merchants and manufacturers. In this I am not singular, inasmuch as a Committee of the House of Commons reported, in 1847, that, unless we can look forward to an increased consumption of those products in which China has the means of paying England for her manufactures, the adjustment of the balance of trade can only be made at the cost of largely-diminished exports and of restricted employment to every branch of industry connected with them;

or, in other words, unless we take from China the products of her industry in exchange for our linens, woollens, hardware, &c. &c., instead of her current silver for East India Company's non-reproductive opium, our mills, factories, and operatives must be restricted in their employment. As this is the recorded opinion of the Parliament, I believe we may both respectfully subscribe Q. E. D.

There is an attempt to excite alarm, that if the East India Company, or President of the Board of Control, is forced into obedience to the Act of Parliament for the government of India, there must be a cessation of public works and improvement, that the progress of education will be stopped, and a doubt will remain whether the armies can be paid. Do not occurring events give a significant refutation to this fear? We have money enough to undertake two transmarine wars, unless the moral dignity of the country arises to prevent that in China which is neither politically expedient nor morally just.

If capital is wanted for legitimate purposes, look at the Indian railway companies, from whom money to any amount can be obtained on interest guaranteed at lower rates than is usual in India, and whose shares are at premium. The money paid into the Leadenhall Street treasury by those companies tends in some degree to relieve the extraordinary efflux of specie to the East, as it defrays the home expenses, for which funds would otherwise have to be remitted from India and enlarge the vacuum there. We have English capital in Indian banks, and vested in undertakings to navigate her rivers and irrigate her lands. We have a demand for English capital and enterprise to turn her waste and unimproved—and worse than either—her poppy fields into cotton grounds, tea gardens, and sugar plantations; to extract from the beegah of 27,225 square feet of India's richest soil, something more and better than about 14lbs. of opium, worth about 4*l.* sterling, per annum, cost of production included, which is the present outturn.

If a reduction of 20 or 25 per cent is made on the advances to opium-ryots, and the amount of opium thus annually diminished,

while the restrictive laws are maintained, the price of the drug will be enhanced as it is gradually being withdrawn from use. This will facilitate the transition of the East India Company's finances from a vicious to a sound state; and as the ryots will, in all probability, require assistance in turning to other pursuits, let the Government for a limited, but sufficient time, make them advances for the cultivation of cotton and other products of raw material, tobe exchanged for English goods in due course of trade.

But if this or some better course is not adopted, what must soon be the result? Already the poppy is largely grown in China, wherever the Imperial authority is so weakened by rebellion within, and British aggression from without, that its laws can no longer be enforced. The native opium sells at about one-fifth of the price of the imported drug, and its manufacture is rapidly extending.

Again, the rebels, or patriots, or whatever they may be, under Tae Ping Wang, most rigidly prohibit the use and admission of opium wherever they have rule. These circumstances place our smuggling and revenue on two stools, between which we must eventually come to the ground. If cultivation goes on, we shall be beaten out of the market by a cheaper drug; if either the Imperial authority, or that of its rival, Tae Ping Wang, should be enabled to enforce a law common to both, then our revenue must be destroyed on that alternative. Sooner or later the Indian revenue must, if left in its present iniquitous and insecure state, collapse; and when that takes place, it may be too late to find the remedy which is now so plainly before us.

There is another plea for opium smuggling, in itself so curious that I must just touch upon it. Its advocates reply to Chinese remonstrances, and advance in the House of Commons, that if England did not carry on this wretched trade, other nations would. Then, why do they not? We cannot prevent them. In Southern America, and many other genial climes and soils, the *papaver somniferum* could be cultivated to any desired extent. The Americans know something about the traffic; they have capital and enterprise for any undertaking that promises to turn out well; and we find them, not raising a competition, but availing themselves—princi-

pally, I believe, for the purposes of exchange—of such facilities as the British system affords of enriching a few speculators in contraband, and I believe I may say almost necessitates, for the convenience of remittances in the general course of trade. If this argument of our opponents is good for anything, it only indicates another danger to our Indian revenue, whenever the Americans, French, Spaniards, or Dutch, in their countries or colonies, choose to encourage or allow their subjects to emulate, and thereby destroy our iniquitous policy and unsound basis of finance.

I believe I have now touched upon all that is necessary to reply to in the question propounded—all that is essential to the subject, though not all that is irrelevant to it in the book.

It may be inferred that the author has been in India; and with a laudable desire to render himself useful to his country has, like Lord Stanley, Mr. Danby Seymour, and others, sought information in the East. We are not the less indebted to his public spirit for the readiness with which he imparts the knowledge he has acquired, though we may observe that it is not so accurate as on the subject of British taxation, with which he is evidently more familiar.

After the controversial courtesy with which he has noticed my endeavours on a subject of interest to us both, I would in conclusion assure him, and all to whom he has addressed himself, that neither I, nor those with whom I associate, look upon the system by which "India has been won, and by which it is held and preserved, as one of unmitigated evil." So far from thinking "the civil functionaries of India overpaid, pampered, and corrupt extortioners," it is my happiness after much opportunity of witnessing their conduct, and forming the friendship of many, to believe, that as a body they are, for accomplished ability, self-denying, and I may add often self-destructive zeal, and the strictest integrity, unsurpassed, if not unequalled in the world; in my humble opinion to which the author refers, it is to be regretted that more of them do not return to this country rich enough to enter public life on their own accounts, nor sufficiently well known to be brought forward by others. I do believe, that among them, those with corrupt hearts and minds of inferior order have oppressed the

natives, and impeded the development of the resources of the country. I do believe that there is much sound principle in some of the many systems of Indian taxation; and if my opponent will make himself master of what Lord Harris has done at Madras, he will perceive how that which is defective can easily be remedied. He will see the beautiful problem worked out, that relief from oppressive taxation and legislation emancipates and gives elasticity to the energies and industry of the people, and increases the riches of the kingdom and the revenues of the State.

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